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The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Motaz M. **Zahran** (Egypt)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 52/41 of 9 December 1997.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 17 September 1998, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 63 to 79, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 12 to 16 and from 19 to 21 October (see A/C.1/53/PV.3–12). Thematic discussions on the items were held, and draft resolutions were introduced and considered, at the 14th to 21st meetings, on 23 and from 27 to 30 October and on 2 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.14–21). Action on all draft resolutions was taken at the 22nd to 31st meetings, from 3 to 6 and on 9, 10, 12 and 13 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.22–31).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East (A/53/457).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.21/Rev.1 and Rev.2

5. At the 21st meeting, on 2 November, the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the League of Arab States,

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submitted a draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" (A/C.1/53/L.2/Rev.1).

6. At the 25th meeting, on 6 November, the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the same sponsors, introduced a revised draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" (A/C.1/53/L.21/Rev.2), in which the fifth preambular paragraph, which had read:

> "*Emphasizing* the importance of the full implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 11 May 1995, in which the Conference noted with concern the continued existence in the Middle East of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, reaffirmed the importance of the early realization of universal adherence to the Treaty and called upon all States in the Middle East that had not yet done so, without exception, to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible and to place all their nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards",

was replaced by the following text:

> "*Recalling* the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 11 May 1995, in which the Conference noted with concern the continued existence in the Middle East of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, reaffirmed the importance of the early realization of universal adherence to the Treaty and called upon all States in the Middle East that had not yet done so, without exception, to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible and to place all their nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards,".

7. At its 26th meeting, on 9 November, the Committee adopted the sixth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.21/Rev.2 by a recorded vote of 141 to 2, with 2 abstentions. The voting was as follows:[1]

In favour:

> Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab

[1] Subsequently the delegation of Angola indicated that it had intended to vote in favour.

Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

India, Israel.

Abstaining:

Cuba, Pakistan.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted revised draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.21/Rev.2, as a whole, by a recorded vote of 134 to 2, with 10 abstentions (see para. 9). The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Myanmar, Norway, Singapore.

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

9. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind its relevant resolutions,

Taking note of the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the latest of which is GC(42)RES/43 adopted on 25 September 1998,

Cognizant that the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region of the Middle East would pose a serious threat to international peace and security,

Mindful of the immediate need for placing all nuclear facilities in the region of the Middle East under full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency,

Recalling the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 11 May 1995,[2] in which the Conference noted with concern the continued existence in the Middle East of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, reaffirmed the importance of the early realization of universal adherence to the Treaty and called upon all States in the Middle East that had not yet done so, without exception, to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible and to place all their nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards,

Recalling the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 11 May 1995,[2] in which the Conference urged universal adherence to the Treaty as an urgent priority and called upon all States not yet party to the Treaty to accede to it at the earliest date, particularly those States that operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities,

Noting that, since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 51/48 of 10 December 1996, Israel remains the only State in the Middle East that has not yet become party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Concerned about the threats posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons to the security and stability of the Middle East region,

Stressing the importance of taking confidence-building measures, in particular the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in order to enhance peace and security in the region and to consolidate the global non-proliferation regime,

Noting the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty[3] and its signature by 187 States, including a number of States in the region,

1. *Calls upon* the only State in the region that is not party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons[4] to accede to the Treaty without further delay and not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons, and to renounce possession of nuclear weapons, and to place all its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards as an important confidence-building measure among all States of the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security;

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[2] See *1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I* (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex).

[3] See resolution 50/245.

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

3. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".